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March 6, 2023

The Honorable Kellie Warren
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
300 SW 10th Street
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Testimony In Support of S.B.244

Dear Chair Warren and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

My name is Celinda Gonzalez, and I serve as Manager of State and Local Government Relations for The Home Depot. I am writing in support of Senate Bill 442.

The Home Depot is the world's largest home improvement retailer and in Kansas, The Home Depot currently employs more than 3,336 associates, 16 stores, 1 distribution center, and has an annual economic impact in Kansas of more than \$1.1 billion dollars.

We are encouraged to see the Kansas Attorney General Kris Kobach and the legislature taking steps to address the serious issue of Organized Retail Crime (ORC). The Home Depot sees a critical need for S.B.442 to, more appropriately, combat the rapid growth of ORC and the threat it poses to the community.

To be clear, Organized Retail Crime is NOT petty shoplifting - it is theft for greed not theft for need. These are sophisticated criminals that recruit individuals to steal from retailers, big and small, and then resell the stolen goods to fund more serious crimes. These criminal organizations often travel across multiple counties in a coordinate effort. By giving the Attorney General stronger enforcement capabilities that allow for prosecutorial authority when ORC occurs in multiple counties, the legislature is not allowing these criminal organizations to flourish.

We respectfully ask the committee to give S.B. 244 a favorable report and are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Celinda Gonzalez".

Celinda Gonzalez
State and Local Government Relations, Manager